

# EU Strategy on the Rights of the child

European Commission



March 2021

#EUChildRights  
#EUChildGuarantee

Every child in Europe, and everywhere else, should enjoy the same rights and live free from discrimination and intimidation. With a new Strategy on the Rights of the Child, the Commission is addressing persistent and emerging challenges and proposing concrete actions to protect, promote and fulfil children's rights in today's ever-changing world. This Strategy draws on the contributions of over 10,000 children from the EU and beyond.<sup>1</sup>

## Children say they want to...



**...be active citizens and members of democratic societies**

*"If not us, then who."*  
(16 year-old boy, Romania/UK)



**...have an equal start in life**

*"School lets you open up to the world and talk to people. School is life."*  
(child seeking asylum, France)



**...be free from abuse, violence and anxiety**

*"I wish there were fewer fights and tensions in my family."*  
(child, Greece)



**...be listened to in legal proceedings**

*"Child-friendly justice is a child surrounded by a system in which he/she is protected/listened to/safe."*  
(17 year-old girl, Romania)



**...have equal access to safe online learning and play**

*"I didn't have a computer, the internet didn't reach my village, I didn't have any data and...I had to repeat."*  
(15 year-old girl, Spain)



**...live a life free from fear and war, everywhere**

*"I wish to see my town. Our homes were destroyed, there are no houses standing still anymore. (...) There was nothing here, there were no schools except for tents."*  
(9 year-old girl, Syria)

<sup>1</sup> The data presented here, unless indicated otherwise, come from the reports: ["Our Europe, our rights, our future"](#), ["Just with children. Child-friendly justice for all children in Europe"](#) and SOS Children villages - consultation with children in [residential care](#) and [children receiving family strengthening services](#) and the [summary report](#).

## The European Commission will:



**18.3%**  
of the EU population  
are children



**30.3%**  
of the world population  
are children

- set up an EU Children's Participation Platform;
- include children as agents of change in the implementation of the Climate Pact and the European Green Deal.

**1/2**  
of children worldwide  
are victims  
of violence  
each year



- seek to address domestic and gender-based violence, and harmful practices against women and girls;
- strengthen integrated child protection systems.

**33%**  
of girls

**20%**  
of boys

In the EU  
experienced disturbing  
content online once  
a month in 2020



- step up the fight against online child sexual abuse and make service providers detect and report inappropriate content online;
- adopt an updated Better Internet for Kids Strategy in 2022.

**22.2%**

of EU children are at risk  
of poverty or social exclusion



- set up a new European Child Guarantee for children in need;
- support efforts towards affordable and accessible healthcare, healthy nutrition, psycho-social support, education and leisure activities.

**1/3** of all asylum applications  
to the EU in 2020  
were children



Out of 119,400,  
2,850 were unaccompanied

- support the training of justice professionals on child-friendly justice;
- work with the Council of Europe to implement their 2010 guidelines on child-friendly justice.

**9.6%**  
of children worldwide  
are victims of child labour



- maintain a zero tolerance policy on child labour;
- allocate 10% of humanitarian aid and funding to education in emergencies and protracted crises.